

JAN 21 1963

STATINTL

Sanitized - Approved For Release : CIA-RDP75-00149R000200670018-1

Rep. Fascell's Curious

# Where Was Our Intelligence On Cuba?

By DAVID KRASLOW  
Of Our Washington Bureau

CPYRGHT

WASHINGTON — Rather gingerly, Rep. Dante Fascell of Miami is beginning to ask some questions about the Cuban missile crisis of last October.

While pertinent, and perhaps obvious, the questions also are quite sensitive. It may be that even historians working after Fascell and the Kennedy administration are long gone from Washington — will not find the full answers.

Though he doesn't put it in these terms, Fascell, in effect, wants to know about the quality of American intelligence.

Fact: President Kennedy, Defense Secretary Robert McNamara, Secretary of State Dean Rusk, and others



Kraslow

insist it was not until Oct. 15 that Washington received "hard" evidence indicating the presence of medium and long-range Soviet missiles in Cuba. A week later the President announced the blockade of Cuba.

Question: Why didn't we learn of these missiles before they arrived in Cuba? (Some actually were installed before the blockade went into effect.)

★ ★ ★

FASCELL, a member of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, cites some interesting background which is not generally known.

The missiles, launchers, and highly complex associated equipment were not shipped in bits and pieces requiring a major assembly job in Cuba.

They were "prefabricated" in the Soviet Union and arrived in Cuba in virtually completed units ready for quick installation, according to Fascell.

This appears to have been



Rep. Dante Fascell  
... feeling his way

part of Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev's strategy — to quickly confront the President with a fait accompli, long-range missiles in Cuba loaded and pointed at the United States.

"This took a lot of planning, assembling, and construction in the Soviet Union," Fascell says. "It was a major

logistics operation."

"All of the men and the huge equipment had to be moved to a port and loaded aboard ships. Then there was a long ocean voyage of thousands of miles.

"If we didn't know about these missiles until they were in Cuba, there is genuine cause for concern. It appears we will have to do a better job of collecting information."

★ ★ ★

FASCELL, it should be stressed again, is feeling his way. He does not know the answers. He does not know what information was available to the President in the months preceding the October showdown.

It might well be that the Central Intelligence Agency or the intelligence arms of the military services picked up some hints of what was going on inside the Soviet Union, but the information wasn't conclusive enough for the President to act.

Perhaps this was behind the President's public warning to Khrushchev early in September that the United States would act if "offensive" weapons showed up in Cuba.

But this is sheer speculation. As far as the record goes, the President had no sure knowledge of what was happening until aerial photographs showed missiles being installed in Cuba.

And this is what bothers Fascell, even while recognizing that the Soviet Union is a tight police state where military information is not easy to come by.

CPYRGHT